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THE

PRESTON GENEALOGY

ORANGE COUNTY BRANCH

AND

SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR

DAVID C. PRESTON

Published for David C. Preston by
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"A people which takes no pride in the noble achievements of remote ancestors will never achieve anything worthy to be remembered with pride by remote descendants.

"It is impossible not to respect the sentiment which indicates itself by these tokens.

"It is a sentiment which belongs to the higher and purer part of human nature, and which adds not a little to the strength of States."

—MACAULEY.

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Rec'd Mar 12-1979

DIAGRAM OF THE PRESTON FAMILY IN ORANGE COUNTY, N. Y.

- Stephen Preston
  - Stephen Preston — Born in Connecticut. Corporal in Rev. War.
    - Stephen Preston — Born in town of Stamford, Dutchess Co., N. Y.
      - Mrs. Durbrow
      - " Decker
      - " Keeler
      - — Prestoo
      - John Wright Preston
        - Belle F. Preston
        - John Sears Preston
      - Alfred Preston
        - i. Julia A. Preston
        - ii. Mary Elizabeth Preston
        - iii. John B. Preston
        - iv. William A. Preston
          - Emma F. Preston
          - William H. Preston
          - Frank B. Preston
          - John B. Preston
        - v. Emma L. Preston
      - Roxanna Preston
      - Mary Elizabeth Preston
      - Stephen Lewis Preston
        - Stephen Preston, Jr.
        - Mary Alice Preston
        - Frances Ann Preston
        - John Wright Preston
        - Eugene V. Preston
        - David Christie Preston
        - Infant son, unnamed
        - Jennie Blanche Preston-Greene
          - Edith Birdsall Greene
          - Marguerite Christie Greene
          - Mary Phillips Greene
          - Geraldine Blanche Greene
          - Roswell Fish Greene
          - Frances Preston Greene
        - James Valentine Preston
        - Edith Belle Preston
      - James Valentine Preston

PREFACE

This little work has been prepared with several objects in view. A number of members of the Preston family of Orange County have expressed a wish that the genealogy of the family be written. The genealogy of this branch being written, the relation with other branches is hoped to be ascertained with some degree of accuracy. A sketch of the life of the author is added that his former school and college friends may know of his whereabouts. An effort has been made throughout to secure the exact facts, but mistakes may have been made, and if any are noticed by the reader, it is hoped he will point them out in a kindly spirit, and, if any information concerning the relationship with other branches can be given by the gentle reader, it is sincerely hoped that it will be forwarded as soon as convenient, to the author. The author is in communication with the author of a larger and more comprehensive Preston Family Genealogy which traces the family back to about 1010 A. D.

The author wishes to sincerely thank all those who have given him any data of the family.

Middletown, N. Y., November 27, 1909.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
OF
DAVID C. PRESTON

David C. Preston was born in the house where he now lives, 11 William Street, Middletown, New York, on May 28, 1860. He was a son of Stephen L. Preston, a watchmaker and jeweler, who was in the jewelry business in Middletown a great many years, and a grandson of Stephen Preston, a well known resident of Montgomery, New York, for many years.

Stephen L. Preston, the father of the subject of this sketch, was born in Montgomery, New York, September 7, 1822. He was a member of the National Guard in Montgomery, N. Y., and was transferred about 1850 to the famous Washington Greys, a National Guard Regiment of New York City, serving in mob riots in the city, receiving an honorable discharge at the expiration of his time. He was also prominent in Odd Fellowship about forty years, being a member of Middletown Lodge, No. 112, I. O. O. F., from its earliest days. He was also a Past Grand of the same lodge, and the first Chief Patriarch of Orange Encampment, No. 93, I. O. O. F., being Chief Patriarch when the Encampment was established, also a member of Hoffman Lodge, No. 412, F. & A. M., and Midland Chapter, No. 240, R. A. M.

Stephen Preston, the grandfather of the subject of this sketch, was born in the town of Stanford, Dutchess County, New York, February 16, 1786.

From "The Press," Middletown, N. Y., February 18, 1876:

"Mr. Stephen Preston, now residing in this villiage, Wednesday saw his 90th birthday. He was born in the town of Stanford, Dutchess County. He came to Middletown with his father, and remembers our villiage as a boy, eighty-five years ago when it had only two or tnree houses. He has lived all his life, except when learning his trade, in this town, and the town of Montgomery. He followed the business of Cabinet Making and Undertaking in the villiage of Montgomery forty-one years, and lived in the town fifty-three years.

We received a call to-day from the old gentleman, who appears hale and hearty, and promises to live yet to be a centennarian."

He often told the members of our family that *his* father's name was Stephen Preston and was born in Connecticut and that his grandfather's name was Stephen. He also told us that his father was a corporal in the Revolutionary War. This has been verified by corresponding with the Sons of the Revolution by the following letter from L. B. Wilson, Curator of Fraunces Tavern, corner Broad and Pearl Streets, New York City:

"In "Connecticut Men in the Revolution," edited by Professor Henry P. Johnson, A. M., I find on page 263, Wyoming Valley Companies, Corporal Stephen Preston, age twenty-seven, size, five feet, eleven inches, in Captain Robert Durkee's Company."

It states that Wyoming Valley, Pennsylvania, was orginally settled by Connecticut people and contributed two Independent Companies. They joined Washington's Army in New Jersey about January 1, 1777, and were engaged in the affairs at Millstone River and Bound Brook, N. J., and battles of Brandywine and Germantown in Pennsylvania, and wintered at Valley Forge, 1777-1778. The two companies were consolidated and ordered to the Wyoming Valley where they built a fort and joined Sullivan's Expedition against the Western Indians. Only a small portion returned to Washington's Army in the Highlands.

Corporal Stephen Preston ~~may have been~~ was a ~~descendent~~ Conn. of Martin Preston, who, with his two brothers, came from ~~Eng-land~~ Conn. and settled on Preston Mountain, sometimes called Dover Mountain, near the Connecticut State line. Martin Preston's brother, Obadiah, settled in Cherry Valley, N. Y. The other brother settled in New York State. However Corporal Stephen Preston may have been related to the Prestons of Wayne County, Pennsylvania, and Lordville and Stockton, Deleware County, N. Y. ~~A partial inquiry among the Dutchess County, N. Y., and Woodbury, Conn. Prestons, did not show the exact family relation.~~

There is a very prominent branch of the Preston family in Virginia, also another in Pennsylvania, besides those in Connecticut and New York.

There was also a family of Prestons who came to America with the Pilgrim Fathers about 1654 and whose names are enrolled in Hotten's Ship Lists which can be found in the Lenox Library.

There was also a William Preston who came to America in 1635 in the good ship *"True Love"* and settled at New Haven, Conn. His descendents settled at Stratford and Woodbury, Connecticut.

There was brought from England a coat of arms of the family, which is in circulation in some of the families, and which shows them to be related to a Preston who was of the royal line and was an Earl in the House of Lords. The Earl's residence was at Beeston, St. Lawrence County, Norfolk Bart, England. The coat of arms represents Ermine on a chief's sable; three crescents gold, crest, a crescent, Ermine indicating royalty. Motto: "Lucem spero clariorem" – "I hope for clearer light." (See Burke's Peerage.)

The mother of the subject of this sketch, Margaret A. Preston, is still living at her home on William Street, at a ripe old age, and has a host of friends who are all interested in her welfare. Margaret A. Preston, who was Margaret A. Christie before marriage, was born February 5, 1827, near Deckertown (now Sussex,) New Jersey. She was a granddaughter of David Christie, who owned the farm in the town Minisink now owned by Chas. Walling.

David Christie was a prominent magistrate and legislator, and a man of unsullied integrity. He was an Orange County Supervisor from the town of Minisink 1808-1809-1810; also 1821; also 1825-1826-1827-1828, and Assemblyman 1823.

David Christie Preston, the subject of this sketch, attended private and public ward schools, including the old Orchard Street School, in Middletown, New York, until 1871, when he was promoted to Wallkill Academy, graduating from the Intermediate Department under Ira L. Case in 1876. He attended the Senior Department under Miss Frances A. Dean for a couple of years, then went with his father, Stephen L., to learn the watchmaker's trade. In May, 1879, he accepted a position with his brother, Stephen Preston, Jr., in his store at 50 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

In the fall of 1882, wishing to secure a more thorough education, he went to Hamilton, N. Y., and entered Colgate Academy, taking the full classical course, and was graduated in 1886. From the first of April untill the last of June, 1884, Mr. Preston taught school at Amity, Orange County, N. Y., in order to help pay expenses while at Colgate. During the summer months he would canvas and collect subscriptions and news items for the Orange County Press of Middletown; also for the Waterville Times, of Waterville, Oneida County, N. Y.; also one summer for the Lewiston Gazette, of Lewiston, Maine, which last gave him an opportunity to visit the Rangely Lakes.

After graduating from Colgate Academy he attended Madison University (now Colgate) in the Class of 1890 for one year, and affiliated with the Delta Upsilon Fraternity. He was also in later years a student in California College at East Oakland, and a member of the Rockefeller Literary Society in that institution, and afterward was regularly admitted to Sophomore standing in the University of California at Berkeley, California, and served as cadet in the military department of the University. While still a student of this University he taught for a short time as supply in the Selborne School of San Rafael, Cal.; under Octavius Bates, a graduate of Oxford, England, and G. C. Thompson, Ph. D., Yale.

After leaving Madison University at Hamilton, N. Y., Mr. Preston was employed as clerk with the jewelry firm of Jos. Seymour Sons & Co., of Syracuse, N. Y. Shortly afterward, in the fall of 1887, he secured a good position as collector for a large wholesale house—Hough's, of Albany, N. Y., traveling all over northern New York, with headquarters at Watertown. He traveled through Rome, Syracuse, Oswego, Watertown, Ogdensburg and Malone, stopping at all the small towns between.

After traveling two years he returned to his native town, Middletown, N. Y. Here he was appointed and served two years as clerk in the Post Office under Capt. Ira Darrance, Postmaster. In August, 1891, he accepted a position with a Chicago firm, going to Chicago, and from there to Texas. His work as salesman for a publishing house brought him in contact with the school teachers of Ennis County, Texas, who urged him to take the teachers' examination, which he did, securing a first grade certificate good for two years. He immediately secured a position as teacher in the High School at Ennis, Ellis County, Texas, where he taught until December 1, 1891, when he went to Oakland, California, where he obtained a position as stationary engineer, having charge of a stationary engine and water supply plant. He also enlisted, April, 1894, in the National Guard of California, Co. F., of the 5th Regt.

In July, 1894, this Regiment, with many others, was called out to assist the Government in the great railroad strike of 1894. Co. F. was the first to the Alameda Mole, and assisted in raising the blockade at that point. From there they went to a railroad bridge in Alameda, and from there to the railroad yards in West Oakland. While in Oakland, Cal., Mr. Preston tried the civil service examination for clerk in the Post Office, and passed at the head of a list of forty applicants.

During the summer that the Fifth Regiment camped at Santa Rosa, Private Preston was transferred to Company B, of the same Regiment, at San Jose, and while there took special studies at the San Jose Normal School and had an opportunity to visit Lick Observatory on Mount Hamilton as an astromony student of the University of California. He was transferred back to Company F in the fall.

After serving four years in the National Guard the Spanish-American War began, and Mr. Preston was mustered in with his companions into Co. F., of the the 8th Regt. Cal. U. S. Vol., Thursday, July 7, 1898, at Camp Barrett. While at Camp Barrett a powder mill closely adjacent to the camp of the 8th Regiment was blown up and six men were killed (the Sheriff and his posse, who were after a Chinese murderer.) Some of their tents were blown over, and the camp presented a scene of dreadful desolation, as portions of the wreckage were scattered about the camp. Besides the damage mentioned at least a dozen houses were totally destroyed, and over eighty were badly wrecked. One building, an immense factory, was completely split in two from one end to the other. In September, 1898, the Third Battalion, of which Co. F. was one of the companies, accompanied the Colonel and his staff to Benicia Barracks, at Benicia, Cal.

Henehan

On August 30, 1898, Private Preston was taken sick with typhoid fever, and was confined to the hospital untill October 22, 1898. On December 23, 1898, Co. F. and Co. L. went to Angel Island, Cal. While at Camp Barrett Private Preston was President of the Christian Endeavor Society of the 8th Regt., which had a membership of fifty-five. This society worked in the Christian Commission tent and assisted the Chaplain. At Benicia the temperance workers from the town used to help at the chapel on the reservation and the members used to attend the churches.

At Angel Island the Chaplain of the Third Artillery looked after the spiritual interests of Co.' F. and L. The Christian Endeavor Society was reorganized and Private Preston was elected President. At Benicia and Angel Island Private Preston had a kodak and secured many excellent views of soldiers and soldier life.

On January 28, 1899, at Angel Island, Co's F. and L. were mustered out the same date as the balance of the Regiment in their respective locations. Private Preston returned to mother, home and friends, arriving at Middletown, N. Y., February 10, 1899. After returning home Mr. Preston served about two years in Co. I. First Regt. of the National Guard of New York State.

On June 3, 1899, Mr. Preston tried the civil service examination and passed the highest on the list, and received the appointment as clerk in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office. Under Postmaster Byron S. Dayton, July 1, 1899, Mr. Preston was appointed sub-clerk, and July 1, 1901, regular clerk, and served seven years as money order and registry clerk. Nov. 1, 1908, Mr. Preston was transferred from money order clerk to regular letter carrier, where he is now serving.

Mr. Preston is a member of the following organizations and societies:

Alfred C. Weller Camp, No. 32, U. S. W. V. Commander
United National Association of Letters Carriers, Br. 526.
Delta Upsilon Fraternity, Colgate, x'90.
First Baptist Church.
Men's Club of the First Baptist Church.
~~Forget-me-not Circle, No. 553, P. H. C.~~
Middletown Lodge, No. 112, I. O. O. F. Trustee
Orange Encampment, No. 93, I. O. O. F. Treasurer
National Geographical Society.
New York Historical Association

FIRST GENERATION

New England Historic Genealogical Soc.

STEPHEN PRESTON

Born in Connecticut about 1750. A corporal in Captian Durkee's Company in the Revolutionery War. Joined Washington's Army. Engaged in the affairs at Millstone River and Bound Brook, N. J., and battles of Brandywine and Germantown, and wintered at Valley Forge, 1777-1778.

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SECOND GENERATION

STEPHEN PRESTON,

born in town of Stanford, Dutchess County, New York, February 16, 1786, and shortly afterwards removed to Montgomery, Orange County, New York, where he held the following offices: Village Trustee in 1816, Fire Warden in 1817, Collector in 1821, 1822, 1823 and 1825; Fire Warden in 1828 and 1829, Trustee in 1845, Treasurer in 1856.

On November 8, 1817, Stephen Preston and fourteen others were appointed firemen of the Village of Montgomery, N. Y., and were known as Engine Company, No. 1, this being the first fire company in the State of New York, outside of New York City. He married Mary Wright November 23, 1809, and died near Montgomery, December 18, 1880.

Their children were:

i John Wright Preston, born August 20, 1811. Married Hannah Sears. Died October 24, 1870.

ii Alfred Preston, born August 26, 1813. Married Mary Elizabeth Boak. Died November 19, 1875.

iii Roxanna Preston, born October 20, 1816. Died September 22, 1834.

iv Mary Elizabeth Preston, born January 3, 1819. Died October 23, 1842.

v Stephen Lewis Preston, born September 7, 1822. Married Margaret Ann Christie, November 1, 1848. Died November 18, 1883.

vi James Valentine Preston, born April 28, 1884. Unmarried. Died July 23, 1872.

Afterward Stephen Preston married Anna G. Sanns, June 29, 1836. No children.

Afterward Stephen Preston married Catherine Sly, May 21, 1857. No children.

——————PRESTON-DURBROW

a sister of Stephen Preston.

——————PRESTON-DECKER

a sister of Stephen Preston.

——————PRESTON-KEELER

a sister of Stephen Preston.

——————PRESTON

a brother of Stephen Preston was buried in the Congregational Churchyard in Middletown, N. Y.

THIRD GENERATION

JOHN WRIGHT PRESTON,

born August 20, 1811. Married Hannah Sears. Died October 23, 1870.

Their children were:

i Belle F. Preston, born 1859. Died 1871. Twelve years of age.

ii John Sears Preston, born November 19, 1861. Married Anna W. Smith (deceased.) Still living.

ALFRED PRESTON,

son of Stephen Preston and Mary Wright, born August 26, 1813. Married Mary Elizabeth Boak, March 31, 1841. Died November 19, 1875.

Their children were:

i Julia A. Preston, born February 22, 1842. Died March 8, 1842.

ii Mary Elizabeth Preston, born June 4, 1843. Married George J. King, October 24, 1878.

iii John B. Preston, born August 12, 1845. Died November 8, 1848.

iv William A. Preston, born September 1, 1850. Married M. Fannie Parkhurst, May 1, 1872. Married Sarah E. Cooley, February 22, 1882.

v Emma L. Preston, born March 20, 1855. Died September 30, 1860.

ROXANNA PRESTON

daughter of Stephen Preston and Mary Wright, born October 20, 1816. Died September 22, 1834. Almost eighteen years of age.

MARY ELIZABETH PRESTON

daughter of Stephen Preston and Mary Wright, born January 3, 1819. Died October 23, 1842. Twenty-three years and nine months of age. Of this beautiful and accomplished young lady, there is still in possession of the family, a large oil portrait.

STEPHEN LEWIS PRESTON

son of Stephen Preston and Mary Wright, born September 7, 1822. Enlisted March 1, 1848, in Co. A, 8th Regt., Battalion of Washington Guards or Washington Greys, N. Y. State Militia. Honorably discharged June 20, 1855, and was a member of the following Fraternal Orders: Middletown town Lodge, No. 112, I. O. O. F., Orange Encampment, No. 93, I. O. O. F., Hoffman Lodge, No. 412, F. & A. M. and Midland Chapter, No. 340, R. A. M. Married Eve Jane Shafer, April 23, 1846, by whom there was one son,

i Frederick Shafer Preston, born May 17, 1847. Died October 17, 1848. Eve Jane Shafer Preston, died September 24, 1847.

Married Margaret Ann Christie, November 1, 1848.

Their children were:

Stephen Preston, Jr., born February 8, 1850. Still living.

ii Mary Alice Preston, born March 2, 1852. Died April 15, 1877.

iii Eugene Christie Preston, born December 30, 1853. Died September 10, 1858.

iv Frances Ann Preston, born January 14, 1856. Still living.

v John Wright Preston, born September 29, 1857. Still living.

vi David Christie Preston, born May 28, 1860. Still living.

vii Infant son, unnamed, born May 10, 1863. Died May 12, 1863.

viii Jennie Blanch Preston, born September 4, 1864. Still living.

ix James Valentine Preston, born March 3, 1867. Died September 26, 1867.

x Edith Belle Preston, born August 30, 1873. Died January 22, 1877.

JAMES VALENTINE PRESTON

son of Stephen Preston and Mary Wright, born April 28, 1824. In the spring of 1850, during the gold fever, he went to California and was there until 1867. Again the next year he went to California and from there to Lima, Peru, where he was engaged as an engineer in the construction of a railroad in the Andes Mountains. After returning, died July 23, 1872.

FOURTH GENERATION

JOHN SEARS PRESTON

son of John Wright Preston and Hannah Sears. Born November 19, 1861. Clerk in New York City Post Office 1880-1882. Clerk in Railway Mail Service, 1882-1893. Married Anna W. Smith.

WILLIAM A. PRESTON

son of Alfred Preston and Mary Elizabeth Boak, was born September 1, 1850. Past Master of Boiling Spring Lodge, No. 152, F. & A. M., of Rutherford, N. J. Member of the Consistory of New York City, A.: A.: S.: R.: 32o, and Mecca Temple, A. A. O. N. M. S. of New York City. President of Board of Health, Rutherford, N. J., 1887-1889, Mayor of Rutherford, N. J., 1889-1891, President of Rutherford Mutual L. & B. Association, 1897-1901. Honorary Member of Excelsior Hook & Ladder Co., No. 1, of Middletown, N. Y., and Union Truck and Bucket Co., No. 1, of Rutherford, N. J. Married M. Fannie Parkhurst May 1, 1872. Died January 12, 0000.

Their children were:

i Emma F. Preston, born March 31, 1873. Married Louis H. Wood, September 12, 1893.

ii William H. Preston, born January 14, 1875. Married Mary W. Carpenter September 26, 1905.

again William A. Preston, son of A. P. and M. E. B., married Sarah E. Cooley, February 22, 1882.

Their children were:

i Frank B. Preston, born December 22, 1882.

ii John B. Preston, born November 20, 1884. Died July 22, 1885.

STEPHEN PRESTON, JR.

son of Stephen Lewis Preston and Margaret Ann Christie born February 8, 1850. Established in the Jewelry business in New York City and removed to Mount Vernon in 1894. Member of Hiawatha Lodge, No. 432, F. A. & M. Mount Vernon Chapter, No. 228, R. A. M., and Bethlehem Commandery, No. 53, K. T., of Mount Vernon, N. Y., Mecca Temple, Ancient Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of New York in 1877, Associate Society of Farnsworth Post, No. 170, G. A. R., of Mount Vernon, N. Y., Clinton Hook & Ladder Co., No. 1, from December 1905 to January 1909, and was Treasurer from February 1903 to June 1907, veteran member of Clinton-Hook & Ladder Co., No. 1, and Treasurer in 1908. Hudson Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association, and was President from June 1905 to June 1906. Married Ella F. Axford, June 5, 1873.

JOHN WRIGHT PRESTON

son of Stephen Lewis Preston and Margaret Ann Christie, born September 29, 1857. Enlisted in Company 1, First Regiment, (24th Sep. Co.) N. G. N. Y., November 23, 1896. Detailed as Company Musician December 7, 1904, received full and honorable discharge, May 21, 1906, re-enlisted May 31, 1906, dropped from the rolls October 29, 1907, taken up by Company E, Second Regiment, (36th Sep. Co.) N. G. N. Y. July 13, 1908, as Company Musician. Still serving. Formerly a Past Grand of Gettys Lodge, No. 11, I. O. O. F. Member of Washington Encampment, No. 6, I. O. O. F., and of the Canton. Married Ida May Sharp, December 25, 1876. No children.

DAVID CHRISTIE PRESTON

son of Stephen Lewis Preston and Margaret Ann Christie, born May 28, 1860. Was graduated from Colgate Academy, June 19, 1886. Served in Spanish-American War in 1898. Money Order Clerk U. S. P. O., Middletown, N. Y., 1901-1908. Letter Carrier 1908———. Still living.

JENNIE BLANCHE PRESTON-GREENE

daughter of Stephen Lewis Preston and Margaret Ann Christie born September 4, 1864. Married Zopher K. Greene, March 12, 1885.

Their children are:

i Edith Birdsall Greene, born February 14, 1886. Graduate Passaic General Hospital as Trained Nurse. Head Nurse in American Hospital, Havana, Cuba.

ii Marguerite Christie Greene, born May 26, 1889.

iii Mary Phillips Greene, born July 28, 1891.

iv Geraldine Blanch Greene, born February 21, 1893.

v Roswell Fish Greene, born July 17, 1896.

vi Frances Preston Greene, born May 26, 1898.